

2012 Essay Contest - Additional book titles

Cha, Dia. *Dia's Story Cloth*. New York: Lee and Low Books, Inc., 1996. unpagged
Born in Laos, Dia fled with her family to Thailand as a child, spending four years in a refugee camp before arriving in the U.S. Her story is chronicled in an intricately stitched, traditional, colorful story cloth. For centuries, needlework has been part of Hmong culture. But it has only been since the war in Vietnam and Laos, which displaced many Hmong, that the new, narrative form of "story cloths" has emerged as a bridge between past and present. grades 1-6

Cooney, Caroline B. *Diamonds in the Shadow*. New York: Delacorte Press, 2007. 228 pages.
The Finch family in Connecticut welcomes five refugees from Sierra Leone, but only four are going to stay with them. Jared, the Finch family's oldest son, realizes that something is wrong, and he must make a decision that could change the fate of both families. grades 5-8

Ellis, Deborah. *Mud City*. Oxford University Press, 2003. 164 pages.
Orphaned Afghan refugee Shauzia, 14, leaves a rough Pakistan border camp and joins other homeless children on the streets of Peshawar. Her dream is to reach the ocean and a place called France. Instead, disguised as a boy, she begs and scrounges for food and odd jobs. In the end, she returns to the rough camp and the tough camp leader, Mrs. Weera, whom she thought she hated. This is a survival adventure, but Shauzia is no sweet waif; she's brave, determined, and rebellious. Her struggle with the rough Mrs. Weera reveals that they are both strong and brave. grades 4-8

Na, An. *A Step from Heaven*. Penguin Putnam, 2001. 159 pages
Young Ju is a Korean immigrant whose family left Korea to come to America (specifically California) for a better life. Young Ju is suspended between adopting American ways and keeping her Korean heritage alive. Young Ju's family is not what it appears on the outside. Her father is abusive and an alcoholic. Her mother is obedient but strong. Young Ju is trying to cover up her reality and her brother is rebelling against everything. What becomes of this family makes a compelling story of how much a family can endure and overcome. grade 8 up

Paterson, Katherine. *The Day of the Pelican*. New York: Clarion Books (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), 2009. 144 pages
The Lleshis are Albanians living in Kosovo, a country trying to fight off Serbian oppressors, when suddenly they are homeless refugees. They find their courage tested by hunger, illness, and a long, arduous journey with danger on every side. Then, unexpectedly, they are brought to America by a church group and begin a new life in a small Vermont town. The events of 9/11 bring more challenges for this Muslim family--but the US is their home now so there is no turning back. grades 5-8

Staples, Suzanne Fisher. *Under the Persimmon Tree*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (Francis Foster Books) 270 pages

Najmah, a young Afghan girl whose name means “star,” suddenly finds herself alone when her father and older brother are conscripted by the Taliban and her mother and newborn brother are killed in an air raid. An American woman, Elaine, whose Islamic name is Nusrat, is also on her own. She waits out the war in Peshawar, Pakistan, teaching refugee children under the persimmon tree in her garden while her Afghan doctor husband runs a clinic in Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan. grades 6 and up

Williams, Karen Lynn. *Four Feet, Two Sandals*. Erdman Books for Young Readers, 2007. Beautiful illustrations.

Ten-year-old Lina is thrilled when she finds one sandal that fits her foot perfectly; then she sees that another girl has the matching sandal. The two girls Lina, and Feroza soon meet, each wearing one coveted sandal. Together they solve the problem of having four feet and two sandals. They decide to share the sandals and their stories. grades 2-5

Williams, Mary. *Brothers in Hope: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan*. New York: Lee and Low Books, 2005, unpagged, advanced picture book.

Eight-year-old Garang is tending cattle far from his family's home in Sudan when war comes; he returns to that home to find everything has been destroyed. Soon he meets other boys whose villages have been attacked. They become a moving band of thousands, walking 100s of miles seeking safety — first in Ethiopia and then in Kenya. The boys face numerous hardships and dangers along the way, but their faith and mutual support help keep the hope of finding a new home alive in their hearts. grades 1-6